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Chairman: Ms. Barrington (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Ireland)

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In the absence of the Chairman, Ms. Barrington (Ireland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 92: Macroeconomic policy questions (*continued*)

(d) Science and technology for development (A/55/96-E/2000/84; A/55/413)

1. **Mr. Jordan-Pando** (Bolivia) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement of Colombia on behalf of the Rio Group and of Brazil on behalf of MERCOSUR on the agenda item under consideration. It supported the Ministerial Declaration of the Economic and Social Council entitled "Development and international cooperation in the twenty-first century: the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy". His delegation also agreed with the statement of the delegation of India and the request contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/55/96-E/2000/84) concerning the need for adequate financial resources for the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and UNCTAD, without dwelling on the concept of zero nominal growth of the regular budget, which the General Assembly had not accepted. It also supported the strengthening of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in its system-wide coordination activities for scientific and technological questions and promotion of complementarity of the various activities.

2. He noted the wide consensus expressed in the aforementioned Ministerial Declaration with regard to the fundamental importance of information and communications technologies in the development of the emerging knowledge-based economy and the contribution they could make in accelerating growth, promoting sustainable development and eradicating poverty in developing countries and their effective integration into the world economy.

3. Access to technology should be facilitated mainly among the developing countries and urgent and concerted measures taken at the national, regional and international levels to bridge the "digital divide" between rich and poor countries. Local conditions and content were also important, along with the capacity to develop them in such a way that both individuals and businesses could join the knowledge-based economy, taking into account in each case their own culture, language and diversity, in order to promote their own development in accordance with national and regional strategies.

4. Market forces alone would not suffice to put information and communications technology in the service of development. In order to maximize its impact, effective and meaningful cooperation must be established among Governments, multilateral development institutions, the donor community, the private sector, civil society, academic institutions and other relevant stakeholders — in other words, strategic alliances must be created.

5. Another significant aspect of the Ministerial Declaration was the key role which the United Nations system, in particular the Economic and Social Council, could play in promoting synergies and coherence of all efforts in that sphere. Complementarity should be the key to ensuring that education and knowledge for all were the United Nations goals for the twenty-first century.

6. It would also be advisable to establish new regional forums on information technology, education, knowledge and sustainable development that would culminate in an international meeting concluding with the establishment of an Economic, Social, Science and Technology Council.

Agenda item 96: Operational activities for development (A/55/271)

7. **Ms. Pansieri** (Deputy Director, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)) reviewed the key recommendations and resolutions of a series of intergovernmental processes which had helped to define the priorities of the programme: General Assembly resolution 54/136, the adoption by the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board of the Strategy and Business Plan for 2000-2003, the five-year review of the World Summit for Social Development, and the five-year review of the World Conference on Women. UNIFEM recognized that, as an operational agency of the United Nations system, its support to national and local efforts was the most valuable contribution it could make to the achievement of the goal of gender equality. She drew attention to the note by the Secretary-General on the activities of UNIFEM (A/55/271), which contained an update of its action to

support Governments, civil society and United Nations agencies.

8. UNIFEM had focused its work on three thematic areas: strengthening women's economic capacities and rights; engendering governance and leadership; promoting women's human rights and eliminating violence against women.

9. The inclusion of a gender perspective in national and local budgets could transform the way in which economic policies and allocations were decided and the extent to which they would contribute to achieving gender equality. To assist with the assessments of the commitments made at Beijing and Copenhagen and of the progress achieved, UNIFEM had launched a new biennial report, *Progress of the World's Women*, which had proved to be a useful tool. During the past three years, it had been working with partners in southern Africa and the Commonwealth Secretariat to develop new tools and approaches to gender analysis of budgets, and it planned to apply that experience in all regions of the world in which it worked. It was pleased to note that the Governments of Belgium and Italy were providing initial support for that effort.

10. UNIFEM believed that it was critical for women to take part in shaping the policies and practices that governed national, regional and global agreements in such areas as social responsibility of corporations, new trade agreements, reconstruction of societies emerging from war, or actions to respond to the scourge of HIV/AIDS. Women's voices and priorities must be heard. An important experience in that area had been UNIFEM's recent involvement in the peace process in Burundi, where it had briefed the heads of the various parties on gender issues relating to the negotiations. That had led to the first All-Party Burundi Women's Peace Conference. In Arusha, for the first time, over 50 Burundian women had met with the facilitator of the peace talks, former President Nelson Mandela, and presented their proposals for the draft peace accord, many of which had finally been accepted.

11. The elimination of violence against women was another priority area for UNIFEM. UNIFEM was encouraged by the importance that Governments and United Nations partners had accorded during the five-year review of the implementation of the outcomes of the Beijing Conference to the elimination of violence against women as an obstacle to equality, peace and development. Governments were working with civil society, men's groups and other interested parties to formulate new legislation and generate awareness about the causes and consequences of gender-based violence. However, there remained a critical need to improve national-level data collection on the extent and nature of gender-based violence and for stronger mechanisms for enforcing laws as well as for preventive and protective measures. A key mechanism in that regard was the UNIFEM Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, established in 1996. But it was deplorable that the resources available to the Fund had allowed it to respond to only a very small proportion of the funding requests received.

12. As the results obtained thus far demonstrated, gender equality was an achievable goal. However, it represented a challenge that was too large to be dealt with in isolation. It required partnership and the pooling of all strengths and sources of creativity. UNIFEM stood ready to work with Member States, civil society and the United Nations to make the twenty-first century one that was free of violence and poverty and guaranteed the human rights of all men and women.

13. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, noted the universal scope of UNIFEM activities and the Fund's concerted effort to match its programmes to the specific peculiarities of each region. UNIFEM had helped to strengthen women's economic capacity by opening lines of credit to women entrepreneurs in different regions across the world and empowering small-scale producers by helping them to organize and to work in close partnership. The promotion of innovative uses of new information and communication technologies to empower women, the increased advocacy to influence policy makers and the attendant effect on gender sensitivity in policy formulation, went a long way towards breaking old and new barriers against women. In that regard, detailed research and collation of data in various fields, including the impact of the financial crisis on women and even the effect of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on the employment of women, would be of great value in future formulations of economic policy.

14. In the area of engendering governance and leadership, the Group of 77 and China supported the efforts of UNIFEM to foster women's participation in the decision-making process at all levels, develop laws

and policies that advanced women's empowerment and expand women's participation in peace-building and conflict resolution, taking into account the fact that women were disproportionately affected by conflict. The Fund should expand its activities in the areas of eliminating violence against women as well as in capacity-building and the training of human resources.

15. He welcomed the efforts of UNIFEM to take into account the religious and cultural sensitivities of different communities, which would help to achieve more durable outcomes.

16. He hoped that more research and resources would be devoted to the gender-dimensions of the HIV/AIDS pandemic to facilitate global action against the disease, which claimed so many victims in developing countries, particularly among women.

17. It was crucial that the work done by UNIFEM in the preparatory process of the five-year review of the outcomes of the Beijing Conference and the use of new information and communication technologies should be enhanced further by involving all relevant stakeholders in the process of women's empowerment. The Fund's support to a large number of non-governmental organizations representing a wider spectrum of opinions, would contribute to achieving that objective. Therefore, the Group of 77 and China supported the Fund's efforts to increase its resource base and hoped that donor countries and agencies would increase their funding for that worthy global enterprise.

18. **Ms. Gras** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, the associated countries Cyprus and Turkey, said that the United Nations operational activities for development constituted one of the mainstays of the Organization's action to usher in a world of peace and solidarity. In that regard, the European Union was the largest single donor in terms of official development assistance and the financing of the United Nations funds and programmes. The European Union welcomed the recent resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council on operational activities for development and hoped that the same spirit of constructive dialogue and partnership would guide delegations in preparing for the forthcoming triennial review.

19. The European Union agreed with the Secretary-General that the United Nations should not be confined to a purely normative role in the economic and social spheres, since the operational activities for development carried out by the various funds and programmes were essential if they were adapted to the new challenges of a constantly changing world in coordination with the activities of other institutions, including the Bretton Woods institutions.

20. UNIFEM had demonstrated a remarkable capacity to adapt. Faced with a delicate situation in the middle of the previous decade, the Fund had redefined its tasks and methods of operation, rethought its action and established clear priorities. It had thus managed to restore the confidence of member States and donors. The innovative nature of the Fund's programmes should enable it to act as a catalyst in the United Nations system.

21. Recently, UNIFEM had redefined its modalities for cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), by playing an active role in the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) or by making specialist advisers on gender issues available to the technical support teams of UNFPA; there was considerable complementarity between the work of UNIFEM and that of UNFPA. In that connection, the European Union wished to emphasize the importance of guaranteeing women and teenage girls access to health care, particularly reproductive health services.

22. The European Union appreciated the role played by UNIFEM in all the phases of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and was confident that it would show the same commitment concerning the implementation of the recommendations contained in the final document. The human rights approach was one of the elements on which the reforms introduced by the Secretary-General in 1997 was based. It was particularly relevant to UNIFEM due to the special role it had to play in promoting the implementation of conventions on the protection of women's rights.

23. The increased participation of women in decision-making in the political, economic and social spheres was a decisive factor in strategies for poverty reduction, growth and development for society as a whole. Much remained to be done, including in the

developing countries, to achieve the objective of parity. In that regard, the importance for girls to have access to quality education could not be over-emphasized.

24. UNIFEM must continue its efforts to promote the adoption and implementation of national legislation for the elimination of all forms of violence against women. The European Union welcomed the establishment of a trust fund, which was the only existing multilateral funding mechanism to support the implementation of innovative strategies in that sphere.

25. The European Union hoped that UNIFEM would continue its efforts to improve the collection of statistical data and provide gender-disaggregated data, especially in connection with the preparation of common country assessments. In that regard, the European Union welcomed the work done in some countries to reflect the gender perspective in the preparation of budgets.

26. **Mr. Valdivieso** (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the countries members of the Rio Group, said that the experience of the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations had been instrumental in the successful implementation of projects in a variety of areas in many countries. Such projects had been important instruments in national capacity-building and in upgrading public social development policies.

27. Despite the success achieved and the reforms under way, which were enhancing efficiency, resources for operational activities, especially what were termed core resources, were inadequate. The steady decline in contributions was a matter of concern, as was the fact that the decline particularly affected the middle-income countries, including some in Latin America and the Caribbean. The situation must be reversed through greater political commitment to the agencies, funds and programmes, and thought must be given to the appropriate criteria to ensure a suitable allocation of the scarce resources for development. His delegation called on the United Nations funds and programmes and the donor countries to devote due attention to the problem. The recent ministerial meeting on the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had given a positive signal that such commitment was possible.

28. In addition to increasing core resources, efforts should be made to devise innovative forms of financing for operational activities, such as cost-sharing and trust funds, and to promote closer collaboration with the World Bank and the regional development banks and greater participation by the private sector and civil society. That approach could provide the international community with an opportunity to put into practice the principle of shared responsibility in finding solutions to matters of common concern, such as the eradication of poverty, drug control, environmental protection, social development, humanitarian affairs and the search for peace.

29. South-South cooperation was a highly important instrument that should have great influence on development in the twenty-first century. The Rio Group had noted with satisfaction the recent initiatives of the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council to support technical and economic cooperation among developing countries and incorporate it into operational activities, thereby making greater use of the experience acquired and the technologies and human resources already available in such countries. In recent years, the countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region had been putting that form of cooperation to work in the most diverse areas, with resources from inside as well as outside the region. The Rio Group thought that the approach had great potential, which should be increasingly explored and supported.

30. In relation to the concepts of national ownership and involvement, the use of the technology and experience of the country itself in the execution of operational activities had been found to lead to more rapid and effective absorption of technical cooperation. It followed that projects should be carried out with flexibility and attention to the characteristics, capacity and needs of the particular country.

31. Development continued to be one of the most important challenges facing the international community, and only the United Nations could move forward the extensive agenda that had been identified in the 1990s. Revival of economic and financial support for its agencies, funds and programmes was crucial.

32. **Mr. Leiro** (Norway) said that the United Nations funds and programmes were key instruments in the fight against poverty. For that reason, his country channelled a large share of its development assistance through them and would continue to promote a strong, efficient and financially sound development arm of the United Nations. At the recent ministerial meeting on UNDP, the Secretary-General had emphasized that it was through its development efforts and tangible

results on the ground that the Organization became meaningful for many peoples of the world. Norway fully shared that view. For many years it had been one of the five largest contributors to nearly all the funds and programmes, and recently it had announced that it would substantially increase its core contributions to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Clearly, better results could be achieved by countries acting together, each in accordance with its capacity.

33. His delegation commended the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) on its work in its three thematic areas: strengthening women's economic capacity; engendering governance and leadership; and promoting women's human rights and elimination of all forms of violence against women. He noted with interest its innovative and experimental activities benefiting women, in line with national and regional priorities and welcomed the Fund's active cooperation with other United Nations agencies, national and international non-governmental organizations and bilateral donors.

34. UNIFEM also had a particularly important role to play in mainstreaming a gender perspective into the activities of the United Nations system. His delegation encouraged the Fund to continue those efforts at the country level, through the resident coordinator system, common country assessments (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and at the Headquarters level through the United Nations Development Group.

35. Lastly, his delegation commended the ability of UNIFEM to adapt to changes and developments in the United Nations environment, such as the greater focus on inter-agency collaboration and integrated conference follow-up. UNIFEM would continue to enjoy his country's support.

36. **Mr. Dausá Céspedes** (Cuba) said that his delegation aligned itself with the statement by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Despite major reforms aimed at enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations funds and programmes, the situation facing the system's operational activities remained critical. At the triennial policy review of those activities, special attention should be paid to evaluating the impact on the ground, which was part of the UNDAF process.

37. The decline in donor contributions to core resources of the funds and programmes, coupled with an increase in non-core resources, was a worrisome trend, which had the twofold disadvantage of reducing the funds earmarked for the priority programmes identified by the Governments and increasing the resources dependent on the will of donors. That situation had negative consequences for the execution of programmes and the impact of activities. Moreover, it undermined the overall credibility of the system, in particular its universal and multilateral nature, as a result of increasing bilateralization and a tendency to favour certain countries over others and, worse yet, to direct resources to non-priority activities. If the trend were not reversed, United Nations operational activities would become irrelevant to many developing countries, and the very existence of the funds and programmes might be threatened. Notwithstanding, it was encouraging that six donor countries had announced at the recent ministerial meeting on UNDP that they would increase their contributions to the core resources of the Programme.

38. The modern world was characterized by the increasing interdependence of countries and economies, but neo-liberal globalization, far from facilitating the technological advance of all nations, exacerbated the inequities and disparities between industrialized and developing countries and between rich and poor. Such inequalities were manifest, not only in what some had called the feminization of poverty, but also in the disproportionately high number of women and inhabitants of the Third World who were illiterate or infected with HIV/AIDS, especially in Africa, and in the phenomenon of child prostitution among girls in the developing world.

39. Cuba supported the innovative activities of UNIFEM, in line with national and regional priorities, to involve women in development activities. It was doing important work in Latin America and the Caribbean, in coordination with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on strengthening women's economic capacity; engendering governance and leadership; and promoting women's human rights and eliminating all forms of discrimination against women. His delegation also supported the work of the Fund in the preparatory process for the five-year review of the implementation of the recommendations of the Beijing Conference.

40. Despite the economic war waged against Cuba for nearly four decades, the position achieved by women in society, their cultural, technical and professional level, their high rates of economic, political and social participation, and the radical changes in their attitudes and lives were significant indicators of social progress. The Cuban experience showed that, given the political will, it was possible to integrate women fully into society. Cuba appreciated the support that UNIFEM had provided to the Cuban Women's Federation and urged closer links. His delegation was confident that UNIFEM would be strengthened.

41. **Ms. Corado Cuevas** (Guatemala) said that her delegation aligned itself with the statements made by the delegation of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by the delegation of Colombia on behalf of the Rio Group. The operational activities of the United Nations were very important to Guatemala, not only because they had an impact on development, but also because they were intertwined with complex matters of political stability and the consolidation of the peace following the conflict.

42. Guatemala was one of the 18 countries chosen to participate in the pilot phase of the reform of the United Nations. The report submitted by the United Nations country team on its experience with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) stated that the United Nations intended to continue providing support to Guatemala in its efforts to consolidate the progress already achieved and move forward on outstanding issues. The work was far from complete, since consolidation of a firm and lasting peace was a long-term process.

43. With regard to the principle of universality, which was basic to United Nations operational activities for development, particularly UNDP, it was worrying that, despite reform efforts, it had not been possible to obtain additional core resources. Even acceptance of the principle of the allocation of resources in inverse proportion to the degree of development had meant, in the implementation phase, that middle-income countries were virtually excluded from cooperation for development. Guatemala had therefore increasingly resorted to the mobilization of non-core resources in order to create a multiplier effect that would enable UNDP to comply with the principle of universality in its activities.

44. The activities of UNIFEM in Guatemala revolved around the strengthening of women's rights in the context of the Peace Agreements which formed the basis for government policy.

45. She expressed concern at the virtual lack of consideration of United Nations operational activities for development in the "We the peoples" report prepared by the Secretary-General for the Millennium Summit. She wished to reiterate that those activities implemented the policies formulated by Member States themselves; however, their success would depend on the obtention of resources.

46. **Mr. Zhdanovich** (Belarus) said that his country attached great importance to UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNIFEM, and to United Nations operational activities for development. He praised the work carried out by those funds and programmes on the basis of the principles of universality, neutrality, multilateralism, better and more effective services provided through projects, the strengthening of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, the strengthening of the role of the country offices, the simplification of administrative procedures and the promotion of responsibility and accountability. Many countries were confronted by crisis situations brought on by armed conflict, economic crises, social problems, an increase in extreme poverty and environmental deterioration. In that context, operational activities based on the national priorities and specific needs of each country acquired crucial importance.

47. The primary objective of operational activities must continue to be satisfaction of the urgent needs of countries faced with emergency situations. It was therefore necessary to build the capacities of the United Nations specialized agencies, particularly UNDP, to provide emergency assistance and help countries to establish early warning systems. In that connection, he welcomed the efforts of UNIFEM to promote women's participation in the peace processes, which would help to strengthen their role in conflict resolution and their ongoing participation in reconstruction and social development in times of peace.

48. Together with natural disaster prevention, special attention should be focused on activities to mitigate the impact of conflict situations and ecological disasters. Most disasters, including the accident at Chernobyl, had lasting consequences. In Belarus, thousands of women and children lived in polluted areas where, in

some cases, there was now a greater incidence of genetic diseases and thyroid cancer. Belarus therefore had a special interest in the active participation of the funds and programmes, including UNIFEM, in the implementation of projects designed to reduce the long-term impact of that disaster.

49. In order to stabilize and increase the resources earmarked for operational activities, multi-annual financing frameworks must be established and there must be greater cooperation between the funds and programmes of the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and civil society. The decrease in core resources remained the most serious problem. In that context, special attention must be focused on the funds' and programmes' policy orientation with regard to communication and information and the intensification of dialogue with governments and the private sectors in the main donor countries, the funds and non-governmental and charitable organizations, with a view to the joint financing of projects.

50. His Government had established close cooperation with the UNDP country office. Despite the scant resources available to it, the Minsk office had demonstrated creativity and initiative in carrying out its important work. Fruitful cooperation had also been established with the UNICEF country office, which would guarantee the implementation of the joint plan of action for 2000-2001.

51. In addition, his Government was cooperating closely with other United Nations organizations within the framework of international technical cooperation programmes. Such cooperation was of particular importance to the economies in transition. He stressed, in particular, the work of UNIFEM, which continued to promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in operational activities and to support actively the reform of the Organization.

52. **Mr. Macheve** (Mozambique) expressed his delegation's support for the statement made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and said that, in addressing the question of development in the context of globalization, consideration must be given to inequalities in the distribution of wealth and income in the world and the need to tackle seriously the problem of poverty. A sustainable world economy could not be achieved if the majority of people lived in absolute poverty, lacked access to drinking water, adequate sanitation facilities and basic education, and were suffering from endemic diseases, such as malaria, tuberculosis and AIDS. The question had been considered at various international conferences and commitments had been undertaken on how to address the issues that could jeopardize the implementation of the Agenda for Development.

53. Globalization must become a central and positive force which benefited all nations, and an effort must be made to ensure that it had a human face. That objective could be achieved through the globalization of development, which required increased official development assistance and direct foreign investment and easier access to world markets, as well as reform of the United Nations system which would put operational activities for development at the centre of its activities.

54. The ongoing reform process in the United Nations was aimed at ensuring that the Organization had the necessary tools to carry out its mandate fully and effectively. His delegation supported the results-based approach and the process aimed at establishing, strengthening and enhancing coordination among the various organizations of the United Nations system. Through those activities, effective sustainable development and poverty eradication projects and programmes had been implemented in developing countries. Operational activities could play an instrumental role in combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic. They were also an important mechanism for fostering international cooperation for development. He therefore called on the international community to uphold, strengthen and enhance them.

55. That process could not be successful, however, without the provision of adequate resources. In that connection, he expressed concern at the continuing decline in official development assistance in general, and core resources in particular, which also undermined the credibility of the Organization, particularly UNDP. He hoped that the political will demonstrated at the Ministerial Meeting on UNDP would help to reverse the situation, and that the outcome of the High-level International Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development, to be held in 2001, would be positive.

56. Mozambique was proud to have been chosen as one of the first 11 pilot countries to put the United Nations reform process into practice, particularly in the

area of harmonization and coordination of activities. The experience in implementing the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in Mozambique had been very positive, particularly with regard to the coordination of development assistance and the promotion of a strong partnership with other international institutions. Such coordination should be further enhanced in order to improve the effectiveness of the activities.

57. As the first UNDAF cycle (1998-2001) drew to a close, the United Nations country team and the Government had met with all development partners to discuss the draft common country assessment, which constituted a valuable instrument for common planning and action and would form the basis for the elaboration of the next UNDAF cycle, whose preparations showed some elements of improvement. His delegation hoped that those improvements would enable the reform of the United Nations to produce the desired outcome.

58. **Mr. Chave** (Switzerland), referring to the funding of operational activities for development, said that many countries continued to be reluctant to undertake multi-year commitments. It was to be hoped that a group of donors would make a start in that connection. He asked for information from the United Nations Development Group on the allocation of resources for the resident coordinator system at the country level, which had declining resources, despite the increase in its coordination activities.

59. It was important to make a frank and possibly independent impact valuation of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) in the context of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review based on the experiences of programme countries and United Nations system organizations. His country would be willing to support such an evaluation financially. UNDAFs should be results-oriented and be undertaken only on the basis of harmonized programme cycles. Programme countries should be "in the driver's seat" and he therefore urged the United Nations Development Group not to set a strict timetable with regard to the number of UNDAFs to be formulated in a given year or period.

60. UNIFEM had increasingly become a leading expert and partner for Governments, non-governmental organizations and international organizations, without losing its experimental and catalytic character. It was one of the few United Nations bodies to have experienced increases both in core and non-core resources in recent years, which was a sign of confidence in its management and relevance. His country had increased its core contribution to UNIFEM by 14 per cent and intended to maintain that level in 2001. It had also contributed 150,000 Swiss francs to the first two editions of the new biennial publication entitled *Progress of the World's Women*.

61. The UNIFEM Strategy and Business Plan for 2000-2003 should build on the experiences of the 1997-1999 plan. The Fund had an important role to play in four areas within the framework set by the Beijing Platform for Action and the actions approved for its implementation at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly: mobilizing debates and actions around topics such as new information and communication technologies, forced marriages and so-called honour crimes; design of indicators and setting of targets for measuring progress in achieving gender equality, including monitoring mechanisms; collection and publication of sex-disaggregated data; and strengthening the linkages between the Beijing Platform for Action and other major United Nations conferences of the 1990s.

62. In the context of coordination and development partnerships, UNIFEM should facilitate gender mainstreaming in all operational activities of the United Nations system and, in collaboration with Governments, the World Bank and other partners, should ensure a gender-balanced approach in the context of comprehensive development framework processes, and in the preparation of poverty reduction strategy papers.

63. His country would continue to collaborate with UNIFEM and invited the Fund's Director to organize a briefing for delegations on the collaboration with, and the work of, the national committees for UNIFEM as well as UNIFEM's principles in doing business with its partners in the private sector.

64. **Mr. Maruyama** (Japan) said that, on the eve of the new century, the operational activities for development of the United Nations system were facing immense challenges and that greater flexibility and greater responsiveness to the diverse national development requirements were needed in order to meet them. In addition, more coherent policies were needed in order to achieve optimal use of resources and the greatest impact. All development actors, including

the Bretton Woods institutions, civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, should take joint action to make the best use of their comparative advantages by adopting common targets, measurable indicators and a results-based approach. His delegation strongly supported the idea of the common programme proposed at the UNDP Executive Board, which would play a central role in promoting aid coordination in the operational activities of the United Nations.

65. As economic disparities continued to exist throughout the world, the eradication of poverty continued to be the top priority of the international community, as well as of his Government. More specifically, the objective had been set of reducing by 50 per cent the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by the year 2015. The United Nations could make a special contribution to the attainment of that objective because of its neutrality, impartiality and universality, the fact that it operated in such a wide range of sectors and its role of advocate in the international community. He requested the organizations of the United Nations system to collaborate with each other and with other development actors, fully utilizing their comparative advantages, and to continue to raise the international community's awareness of the importance of eradicating poverty.

66. The developing countries should be encouraged to integrate poverty reduction measures into all their development policies and to elaborate poverty reduction strategies with time-bound and clear goals. The international community, on the other hand, should intensify its support for such efforts and, in collaboration with developing countries, monitor the progress made and encourage appropriate policy adjustments.

67. His delegation attached special importance to the gender issue. The feminization of poverty was universal. Poverty was more than a lack of income; it was also uncertainty, vulnerability, powerlessness, physical isolation, social exclusion and social, cultural and economic discrimination. The economic opportunities of women were constrained by their lack of control over the crucial decisions that were made regarding the use of resources. The enhancement of women's rights and their control over resources were consequently central to progress towards gender equality. The advancement of women, along with good governance of public affairs, sustainable livelihoods, sustainable management of environmental resources and sustainable human development, were high priorities in the overall efforts to eradicate poverty.

68. Globalization and progress in information technology were bringing about profound changes in everyday life and in social systems. Increasing communication of ideas between people was producing new values and thinking. Ultimately, individuals were the main actors in society. The present time offered an ideal opportunity to correct the longstanding problem of gender inequality and thereby to promote human-centred development and human security around the world.

69. **Ms. Campo** (Venezuela) expressed concern at the reduction in the resources allocated to operational activities for development, which were inadequate for the management of the development process itself: they were funds that should be made available, in a coherent and timely manner, to developing countries requesting them, in the context of organized development plans and strategies without discrimination between regions. Furthermore, it was important that both core and non-core resources should be allocated to recipient countries on a fair and balanced basis.

70. Her delegation drew attention to the need for an increase in core resources for development so that the poor or middle-income countries were not obliged to deploy their own resources for national development and were able to make use of them unconditionally, thereby ensuring the neutrality and independence of such activities.

71. She also considered it important to study the work of the United Nations, carried out jointly with the specialized agencies, international banking institutions and civil society, to mobilize additional resources, together with their contribution and assistance to programmes and projects implemented within the framework of operational activities for development.

72. Consultations between Governments, development agencies and organizations of civil society should be intensified in order to seek innovative solutions to development-related problems, and the results of major United Nations conferences should be applied by means of compliance with the agreed goals and undertakings, bearing in mind that contributions to humanitarian assistance should not be made at the expense of development assistance.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.